

# Scientists' Letter to Students

Duplicate and distribute to students.



Dear Students,

This investigation is a little different from the others. Rather than ask you for new data, you will be able to investigate questions that interest you. In the process of doing your own research, we hope you will learn key science concepts and better understand what science is about.

As you explore your study site, keep track of questions that interest you. Why is the soil wet in one area and dry in another? Why are there so many different types of land cover in your study site? Why do things change so much every season?

Also keep track of questions as you look at data from the other schools around the world. Where are the coldest and warmest places in the world? What is the most common type of land cover reported by schools within 500 miles of your school? What other areas of the world have the same type of land cover? Why?



*Principal Investigator Boris Berenfeld*

These activities focus on seasons. Seasonal changes directly impact our lives. What are the coldest and warmest days of the year at your site? Are these the same every year? Are they the same all over the world? Can you tell what season it is by looking at a satellite photo of Earth from space? Yet, what makes seasons change is not obvious.

The Seasons investigations provides you with a wonderful opportunity to figure out the answers to your questions by looking at the actual data from other schools. This is how scientists learn – they observe the real world, ask questions, collect data, explore the data, ask more questions, and try to figure out what is going on. You will have a chance to design your own investigations and collaborate with other students all over the world to do your research. Ultimately, you will see how your local community fits into the global environment.

Once you feel comfortable with doing scientific investigations, we hope you will design investigations based on any question that interests you.

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*Principal Investigator Dan Barstow expresses the "Wow!" of science education.*